

WCPT endorsement: The Ethical Principles of Health Care in Times of Armed Conflict and Other Emergencies

The World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) endorses the Ethical Principles of Health Care in Times of Armed Conflict and Other Emergencies, arising from the Health Care in Danger Project led by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and encourages its member organisations to promote their implementation and monitoring.^{1,2}

The principles emphasise the ethics underpinning access to and delivery of health care for all during armed conflict and other emergencies and the full implementation of International Humanitarian Law, without discrimination.

Ethical principles guide the relationship between patients, clients, carers and health care professionals; they can also be extended to volunteers and technical support staff. These principles are embodied in WCPT's Ethical Principles and accompanying policy statement on the ethical responsibilities of physical therapists and WCPT members.^{3,4} The ICRC principles supplement these by contemplating issues such as discrimination, abuse of privileges, confidentiality, and torture.

Glossary

International humanitarian law — “International humanitarian law is a set of rules that seek to limit the effects of armed conflict. It protects people who are not or are no longer participating in hostilities and restricts the means and methods of warfare.”⁵

Approval, review and related policy information	
Date adopted:	Drafted November 2015 Revised draft April 2016 Pending approval from WCPT's member organisations at the General Meeting 2019
Date for review:	Dependent on monitoring of ICRC updates

Approval, review and related policy information

Related WCPT Policies:

WCPT Ethical Principles

WCPT policy statements:

- Disaster management
- Ethical responsibilities of physical therapists and WCPT members
- The consequences of armed violence, landmines and other weapons of war

References

1. International Committee of the Red Cross. Ethical Principles of Health Care in Times of Armed Conflict and Other Emergencies. Geneva, Switzerland; 2015. <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/common-ethical-principles-health-care-conflict-and-other-emergencies> (Access date 14th July 2015)
2. International Committee of the Red Cross. Health Care in Danger campaign. Geneva, Switzerland: ICRC; 2015 [Available from: <https://www.icrc.org/eng/what-we-do/safeguarding-health-care/index.jsp>.
3. World Confederation for Physical Therapy. Ethical Principles. London, UK: WCPT; 2017. www.wcpt.org/ethical-principles (Access date 10th March 2017)
4. World Confederation for Physical Therapy. Policy statement: Ethical responsibilities of physical therapists and WCPT members. London, UK: WCPT; 2017. www.wcpt.org/policy/ps-ethical-responsibilities (Access date 10th March 2017)
5. International Committee of the Red Cross. What is international humanitarian law? Geneva, Switzerland: ICRC; 2015 [Available from: <https://www.icrc.org/en/war-and-law>.

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